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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 DAKAR 000043

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TAGS: [PINS](#) [CASC](#) [PHUM](#) [PINR](#) [PU](#) [SG](#)
SUBJECT: MFDC MURDERS CASAMANCE DEPUTY PREFECT: ARE
HARDLINERS TRYING TO SABOTAGE THE PEACE PROCESS?

REF: A. 05 DAKAR 3168 (NOTAL)
[1](#)B. 05 DAKAR 2659 (NOTAL)

Classified By: CDA ROBERT P. JACKSON FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D).

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: After a long period of stagnation in the peace process, the Government and the Movement of Democratic Forces of the Casamance (MFDC) have launched new initiatives. The December 20 meeting in Sao Domingos, Guinea-Bissau (Reftel), between GOS representatives, MFDC leaders, and the &Collectif des Cadres Casamancais,8 a group of leading intellectuals and executives from the Casamance, brought Abbot Augustin Diamacoune Senghor together with MFDC military leaders for the first time in over 10 years. Diamacoune, the founder of the MFDC, discussed independence and the peace process with the &maquisards8 (the rebel fighters). Nevertheless, recent acts of violence, including the January 2 assassination of a GOS sub-prefect by alleged MFDC members, indicate that serious obstacles to the peace process remain. Failure to convince MFDC hardliners to join the peace process may result in more violent incidents by those who fear that the signing of a peace agreement is likely to be done at their expense. END SUMMARY.

CHIEF COMBATANTS WILLING TO NEGOTIATE

[1](#)2. (U) On December 20, Presidential Advisor Pierre Goudiaby Atepa and the Collectif des Cadres Casamancais organized a meeting in Sao Domingos, Guinea-Bissau, with the chiefs of the armed wing of the MFDC. The purpose of the meeting was to have chief combatants meet Father Diamacoune to discuss the peace process and begin to design a common MFDC negotiating platform. The meeting was attended by Magne Dieme, Chief of the &Camp de la Paix8 and Cesar Badiate, Chief of the Kassolol branch, who are the two most representative chiefs of the Atika factions. While the Paris-based Nkrumah and Guinea-Bissau-based Salif Sadio, the most radical leader in the armed factions, boycotted the meeting, at least Sadio,s lieutenants attended. The combatants pressured Diamacoune to issue a statement condemning Sadio,s intransigence and declaring that if he does not join the peace process he will be outlawed by MFDC factions that are in favor of negotiations.

GUINEA BISSAU LENDS KEY SUPPORT TO SENEGAL

[1](#)3. (SBU) The meeting was organized with the blessing of President Wade who asked his Bissau-Guinean counterpart, President Joao Bernardo &Nino8 Viera, to facilitate the meeting. Bissau-Guinean Armed Forces Chief of Staff General Batista Tagme Na Waie played an important role in the meeting and encouraged the unity of the maquis. However, he insisted on the need to neutralize Sadio if peace is to be achieved in Casamance.

RADICALS KIDNAP AND ASSASSINATE A GOS OFFICIAL

14. (C) On January 2, two weeks after the Sao Domingos meeting, combatants allegedly from Magne Dieme,s faction staged several armed robberies of public transport vehicles. The most serious incident occurred on January 2, when they kidnapped the Deputy Prefect (District Administrative Officer) of Diouloulou (in northwestern Casamance). According to President Abdoulaye Wade, the Deputy Prefect shot at the attackers and died from the wounds they inflicted. In a note sent to Diamacoune after the killing, the presumed authors of the &braquages8 warned that they would continue to commit acts of banditry as long as they lack the means to feed themselves.

PEACE HAS A PRICE

15. (C) President Wade continues to pay MFDC leaders to ensure that the ceasefire holds and that acts of banditry are not committed by armed combatants in need. A senior NGO official told Embassy staff that in November, President Wade responded to a request from the maquis and gave 7 million CFA francs (CFAF) (USD 14,000) to the Collectif des Cadres Casamancais to distribute to the maquisards. The GOS reportedly distributes an average of 13 million CFAF (USD 25,000) to the civilian and military wings of the MFDC every month, but distribution of this aid has always been a problem. It is believed that both GOS officials and MFDC chiefs through whom this aid transits keep a significant part, leaving combatants with very little. In fact, MFDC combatants asked Goudiaby to give the food or money to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and ICRC Delegate Henry Fournier subsequently told Charge that he is

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willing and able to distribute the food.

... AND MANY FATHERS

16. (C) Goudiaby, Fournier and SUD FM journalist Ibrahima Gassama credit Ziguinchor Mayor Robert Sagna with encouraging key GOS and MFDC figures to relaunch the peace talks. Although a leading member of the opposition Socialist Party (PS), Sanha enjoys the confidence of both President Wade and a range of MFDC leaders. Gassama,s October interview with Sadio also helped to reenergize the peace process. Gassama, however, has received death threats as a result of the interview. He told Charge and A/PAO that once the charges against him have been heard (Refs A and B), that he would like to leave Senegal for several months on a fellowship of program of study in the United States or Europe.

COMMENT

17. (SBU) COMMENT: Sanha, Gassama and the Sao Domingos meeting have stimulated the peace process at a moment when many observers were worried about the lack of progress since the truce was signed on December 30, 2004. The Deputy Prefect,s murder highlights the MFDC,s lack of control over combatants and, according to Wade, their desperation for food and money. Despite the rise in armed robberies, kidnappings and 9-12 deaths since the truce was signed, the situation in the Casamance is still under control. No armed confrontation has occurred between the Senegalese Army and the MFDC, and President Wade told Codel Kolbe (septel) that he is determined to prevent a resumption of fighting. The desire to resolve the conflict peacefully prevails and is supported by the people of the Casamance. Salif Sadio and his followers, who have remained in the bush since the conflict erupted in the 1980s and are thus out of touch with evolving realities, will be the hardest to bring into the peace process. They still live with the ideals of independence that led them to the &maquis8 (hideout). Violent incidents are likely to continue, given the combatants, lack of confidence in the Government, a negotiated settlement, and

their own post-conflict future. END COMMENT.
JACKSON